

TDMHDD Update

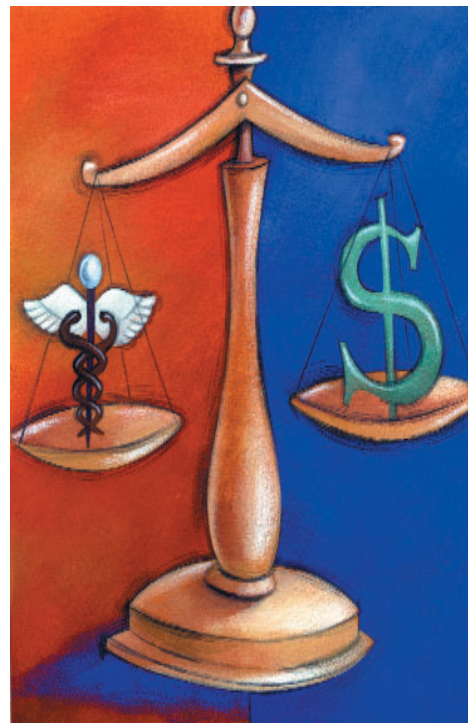
New TennCare Behavioral Healthcare Contracts Sought by State

The state is seeking new contractors for the TennCare Partners Program, which provides behavioral health services for the 1.3 million people in the state's TennCare program. Proposals will be received until October 22, 2003.

"This is an important next step for service development in the Partners program," said Commissioner Virginia Trotter Betts of the Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities (MHDD), which oversees behavioral health services for TennCare members. "New contracts for TennCare behavioral services will enhance stability in the program while

giving the state greater fiscal oversight and management of the behavioral health organizations."

The Request for Proposals (RFP) for behavioral health contractors divides the state into three grand regions for services. This model aligns with the TennCare bureau's strategy to have more than one behavioral health contractor and reduces the potential problems associated with a single contractor for these services. The state is also seeking proposals for a "safety net" behavioral health organization (BHO). This option will afford the state some assurance that, should a contracted BHO fail, there will be minimal disruption of services to TennCare enrollees.



Ventura Named Chief Officer at MMHI



Larry Ventura, an executive with more than 30 years of public healthcare management, will take over as chief officer at Memphis Mental Health Institute (MMHI) on October 5, 2003.

"We were looking for someone with many highly detailed qualifications for this very specialized position," said Commissioner Virginia Trotter Betts. "Larry has a clear understanding of the importance of community providers and hospitals working together in order to facilitate a full continuum of care for people with mental illnesses."

Ventura, most recently, was the chief executive officer for Mildred Mitchell-Bateman Hospital, a 90-bed acute psychiatric hospital in Huntington, West Virginia, where he directed 335 employees with a budget of \$20 million.



"I was most impressed with the dedicated staff at MMHI, and the impressive level of expertise on staff at the facility," Ventura said.



How to Survive a Heart Attack Alone

by **F. Daniel Rochman, MD**

Let's say it's 6:15 p.m. and you're driving home (alone of course), after an unusually hard day on the job. You're really tired, upset and frustrated. Suddenly you start experiencing severe pain in your chest that starts to radiate out into your arm and up into your jaw. You are only about five miles from the hospital nearest your home; unfortunately you don't know if you'll be able to make it that far.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

You've been trained in CPR but the guy that taught the course neglected to tell you how to perform it on yourself. Since many people are alone when they suffer a heart attack, this article seemed to be in order. Without help, the person whose heart stops beating properly and who begins to feel faint, has only about 10 seconds left before losing consciousness. However, these victims can help themselves by coughing repeatedly and very vigorously.

A deep breath should be taken before each cough, and the cough must be deep and prolonged, as when producing sputum from deep inside the chest.

A cough must be repeated about every 2 seconds without let up until help arrives, or until the heart is felt to be beating normally again. Deep breaths get oxygen into the lungs and coughing movements squeeze the heart and keep the blood circulating. The squeezing pressure on the heart also helps it regain normal rhythm. In this way, heart attack victims can get to a hospital.

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